

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan is a roadmap offering practical solutions that communities can adopt to address climate change and strengthen our region's resilience for the future.



Community Resilience Solutions: Adapting Together

Our region is already experiencing climate impacts that affect infrastructure, community health, local economies, and agriculture. Communities that plan for these changes will be more resilient and better prepared for the future.



► Resilient Community Champion

Long Beach built a new Community Hub with offices, event space, council chambers, and a utility shop. It features energy-efficient systems, a rain garden, and is ready for future solar and battery backup.

By 2050, west central Minnesota will:

- Be **4-5° warmer** with up to 20 fewer freezing days a year.
- Have a **longer growing season** with an extended allergy and mosquito season.
- Experience **15% more annual rainfall** in intense storms, followed by periods of drought.
- See **15-20 more days over 95°**, increasing air conditioning demand and health risks for vulnerable populations.

To meet these growing climate challenges, West Central Initiative is helping communities take action now—investing in local energy solutions and smart planning to build a stronger, more resilient future.



Learn more about climate impacts in west central Minnesota with the Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership's Regional Climate Summaries.

Building Sustainable & Resilient Communities:



MUNICIPAL SOLAR

West Central Initiative supports communities in developing small-scale municipal solar projects using financial incentives like tax credits, rebates, and grants. Benefits include:

- Local energy production for community use.
- Lower energy costs and increased resilience.
- Energy independence for the region.



LOCAL GRANT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

West Central Initiative provides technical and grant-writing assistance to help communities access resources for energy efficiency and climate resilience.

Key Actions for Community Sustainability:



LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Climate Impact: Increased precipitation in winter and spring seasons will increase runoff, soil erosion, and nutrient runoff. Increased potential for disruption of food production and distribution may affect food availability and costs.

Action: Develop community garden spaces for self-sufficiency, food security, and community resilience.



GREEN SPACE & TREES

Climate Impact: Higher summertime temperatures will increase the urban heat island effect. Areas with impervious surfaces and little to no tree cover may experience surface temperatures 5-10 degrees warmer than areas with green space and trees.

Action: Assess and increase tree cover with a municipal tree-planting program and encourage native landscaping to reduce mowing, watering, and fertilizing needs.



HEALTH & SAFETY

Climate Impact: MN's weather is becoming more extreme with an increase in severe thunderstorms, wind storms, and blizzards. These weather events will cause more frequent power disruptions.

Action: Designate community emergency shelters with backup power and essential amenities.



BUILDINGS & ENERGY

Climate Impact: Extreme heat and increased days over 90 degrees will put stress on inadequate cooling systems. Buildings without cooling systems will become unbearable on the hottest days.

Action: Conduct energy audits on municipal buildings and implement energy-saving measures. Upgrade cooling systems to high-efficiency heat pumps that can also provide heat in the spring, fall, and mild winters.



ECONOMY

Climate Impact: As winters and summers warm, lake temperatures will increase. This will inhibit the formation of lake ice and disrupt cold water fish populations. This will directly impact ice fishing and summer recreation opportunities.

Action: Use regional climate projections in municipal and economic planning to avoid future costs.



Explore the Region 4 Climate Action Plan for more opportunities to increase community resilience.

- **Contact Cedar Walters**, Director of Climate and Sustainability Programs, at **800-735-2239** or **cedar@wcif.org** or **Griffin Peck**, Energy and Adaptation Planner, at **800-735-2239** or **griffin@wcif.org** to learn more.